



RESERVE PROGRAM NEWSLETTER

September 2006

The Proud, The Prepared, The First

Issue LXVII



This is the sixty-seventh issue of the electronic newsletter from the First District Office. This newsletter is intended to inform all members of the Coast Guard team throughout the District on reserve program issues. Current distribution of this newsletter is to major unit COs/XOs and senior reservists, and to reservists and selected active duty members of the First District staff. Please forward this newsletter throughout your organization by such means as e-mail, posting copies, or mailing copies to reservists at home. This newsletter shares information on the reserve program district-wide. We welcome input and news from field activities. Please note that the information in this newsletter is unofficial. Check references before taking any action based solely on information contained in the newsletter.

From the Desk of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Reserve Affairs



Do your ASQ and Weigh-in during October!

The new fiscal year starts on 1 October, which means a full magazine of drills and a full compliment of readiness requirements to renew. Most Sectors will hold Reserve All-Hands drills—"Readiness Weekends"—in October

to refresh these requirements. This is the ideal time to complete the ASQ, the Annual Screening Questionnaire, if you happen to have waited that long. While you're at it, make sure you get weighed.

Here's the schedule of Readiness Weekends:

- Sector Northern New England: 7 October;
- Sector Southeastern New England: 14 October;
- Sector New York: 14 October;

- Sector
Boston:
22 October.

Sector Long Island Sound's All-Hands is scheduled for 20 January 2007.

District SRO Travel Schedule

I plan to attend the All-Hands drills at Northern New England, Southeastern New England, and Boston (and Long Island Sound in January). In addition, I will be at Station Chatham on 22 October.

D1 Readiness Status

I spoke to the District Commander and the Sector Commanders at the CO's conference held 5-6 September in Portland, ME. I was able to give them some good news: over the last year D1's Reserve readiness posture has improved. Due primarily to the efforts of the Sector CO's and their staffs, not only have our raw statistics moved up dramatically (Dental, for example, has gone from roughly 40% complete a year ago to 70% complete today), but our standing compared to other districts has also improved. A year ago we ranked 9th among districts, while today we are 2nd. This was a heavy lift, particularly as

D1 has far more reservists than any other district. A lot of people on both the Reserve and Active side share the credit for making this happen.

Anyone who has worked in Reserve readiness knows, however, that things degrade far easier than they improve. That is why the upcoming Readiness Weekends are so important. While our readiness posture improved steadily from a year ago through this summer, it has recently hit a plateau and started to dip back down. The Readiness Weekends will give us a shot of adrenaline and help achieve further improvements.

There is room for even more improvement too. In looking at participation rates recently on CG Central, I noticed that more than 15% of D1 reservists failed to complete even half of their required IDT drills during FY 06. That's comparable to all of Sector Boston's reserve force suddenly going AWOL. Given the degree to which the Coast Guard depends on its reserve component to respond to major contingencies, this is unacceptable—these people are simply not Semper Par.

They're not even Sometimes Par. We've got to bring them back aboard.

To do that, I asked the Sector Commanders to identify their personnel who aren't participating at satisfactory levels and to initiate a formal process to get them back up to speed. That process is detailed in Chapter 4 of the Reserve Policy Manual. It lays out an administrative check list for re-establishing satisfactory performance or, as a last measure, separating the member from the service.

Because this is a significant administrative burden, I am establishing at the District office an "Admin Strike Team." This team will be comprised of Reserve members who are admin professionals and who are familiar with the RPM Chapter 4 process. This team will be established shortly after the start of the new fiscal year in October, and its availability to the Sectors will be announced shortly afterward. Look for more on this in next month's column.

- Captain Frank Mullen

Scheduled Requirements

Due in September

Performance Evaluations of E-7 members.

Due in October

Semi-Annual weigh-in of all members.

Annual Screening Questionnaire (ASQ) from all members.

RIRP Takes Effect

Effective 1 September, eligible reserve component members can receive Reserve Income Replacement Program (RIRP) payments.

RIRP applies to members of the National Guard and Reserve who are involuntarily serving on active duty – including full-time National Guard duty – and who are experiencing a monthly active duty income differential of more than \$50.

To be eligible for RIRP, the member must have

- Completed 18 consecutive months of active duty; or,
- 24 months of active duty during the previous 60 months; or,
- been involuntarily mobilized for 180

days or more within six months of the previous involuntary period of active duty of more than 180 days.

RIRP payments top out at \$3,000 per month.

For more information visit www.defenselink.mil/ra. Click on the “Income Replacement” tab, then click on “Points of Contact.”

Some Military Deserters Still Get Paid

Even though they failed to report for duty, dozens of Army reservists and National Guardsmen remained on the military's payroll and received checks totaling more than \$900,000, said a new Government Accountability Office report.

Released on 28 August, the report identified payments to 75 deserters, focusing on seven assigned to a quartermaster company based in Pennsylvania.

The remaining 68 are from across the Army Reserve and National Guard.

The reservists were not named.

The government continues to pay deserters because unit commanders often fail to file the necessary-and-extensive-manual paperwork, or file it incorrectly.

About a third of desertion files are returned because they are incomplete, the report said, noting there is no central database that tracks all deserters.

Marines Tag IRRs for Call-up

President Bush has authorized the Marine Corps to call up Marines from the Individual Ready Reserve (IRR).

The IRR includes 59,000 Marines who have completed their initial enlistment, but are still within a mandatory eight-year military service obligation.

Up to 2,500 Marines may be on involuntary active duty at any time, but the actual number will depend on how many other Marines volunteer for deployments.

Those earmarked will receive at least five months notice to report for an average of 12 to 18 months of active duty.

Needed most are Marines in the combat

arms, communications, intelligence, engineer and military police career fields.

Excluded from the call-up will be Marines in their first year of IRR service and those who have recently been in a combat zone.

IRA Options

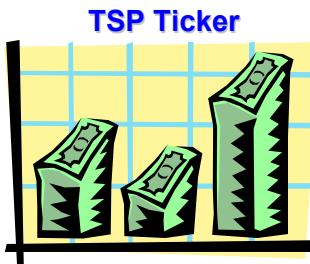
The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) is giving a break to military service members serving in hot combat zones by allowing them to put money into individual retirement accounts (IRAs), even if they received tax-free combat pay.

The IRS announced on 18 August that under the Heroes Earned Retirement Opportunities (HERO) Act, taxpayers now can count tax-free combat pay when determining whether they qualify to contribute to either a Roth or traditional IRA.

Previously, members of the military whose earnings came entirely from tax-free combat pay generally were barred from using IRAs to save for retirement.

The HERO Act also allows military personnel who received tax-free combat pay in either 2004 or 2005 to go back and make IRA

contributions for those years.



All Thrift Savings Plan funds increased in August.

August 2006

C	+2.36%
F	+1.58%
G	+0.44%
I	+2.76%
S	+2.15%

Last 12 Months

C	+8.89%
F	+1.77%
G	+4.91%
I	+23.44%
S	+8.72%

August 2006

L 2040	+2.22%
L 2030	+1.96%
L 2020	+1.81%
L 2010	+1.39%
L Income	+0.90%

Last 12 Months

L 2040	+11.47%
L 2030	+10.55%
L 2020	+9.95%
L 2010	+8.65%
L Income	+6.28%

Closing Quote

"I like to tell people that after 9/11/01 Alan Jackson put out a great song, 'Where Were You When the World Stopped Turning?' about what happened and what everybody thought on 9/11.

"If you're in a ship that's taking on water or if you're on an aircraft that's had to ditch, your world stops turning for you.

"I like to tell everybody that we restart worlds.

"We're in an organization that actually gives people back their lives."

- Coast Guard Commandant Thad Allen in an interview with the Navy League's "Sea Power" magazine (August 2006).

KEEP UP THE GOOD WORK!

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